



Testimony by Dr. Louise Feroe
Connecticut State University System
Before the Higher Education and
Employment Advancement Committee
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Senator Bye, Representative Willis and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, for the record I am Louise Feroe, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs for the Connecticut State University System (CSUS).

I would respectfully submit these comments regarding three proposed bills that the Committee is considering today.

1. Senate Bill 916, *An Act Concerning Remediation*.

I would agree that college readiness, and the issue of remediation, is critically important to Connecticut. With that in mind, every university within CSUS has been working diligently to reduce the need for remediation for incoming students. Obviously, this must be done collaboratively – the universities cannot solve this challenge alone. Programs that you are familiar with, like the “Bridges” program, have had a very positive impact on college readiness, reducing the need for remediation of incoming students. We have also experimented with asking students to accomplish their remediation at a nearby community college – most particularly at Eastern, where the local Community College is just a short distance away. The universities have also piloted a course that combines remedial review with the first college level skills course – in writing and mathematics. This has proven to be very successful at Eastern where a five hour course carrying three credits has served as both the remediation necessary and the general education course in writing and mathematics. This approach is being tried at other universities as well. In addition, we are very interested in working with the community colleges to design a seamless way for students to achieve their remediation at the community college – either their first semester, or the summer prior to freshman year, or even during their senior year in high school.

2. House Bill 6054, *An Act Concerning the Tracking of Unique Identifiers by Institutions of Higher Education*.

I just wanted to provide you with some background information as to what CSUS is currently working on with Department of Higher Education (DHE) and the State Department of Education (SDE) to address the implementation of the unique identifier issue.

Since the Fall of 2009, CSUS has worked on the P20 Council's Data Systems Work Group and Interoperability Work Group (for details see: <http://www.ctdhe.org/P20/DataSystems.htm>). In July 2010 CSUS implemented procedures at each of the four universities in response to the P-20 Council initiative to expand the Connecticut K-12 student longitudinal file so that there will be the potential to link an individual student's K-12 data with the same individual's University data – a statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS).

By way of background, while the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) provides the state assigned student identifier (SASID) for all public school students pre-K through 12, the SASID did not follow the student into Connecticut's public institutions of higher education (IHEs). The Connecticut Public Institutions of Higher Education recently agreed to carry the SASID in their student information systems, provided that the SASID appears on a student's high school transcript. Consequently, CSDE now requires all public school systems to include the SASID on the transcripts of students. K-12 school systems will incorporate the SASID onto the student's paper high school transcript that is received by the university. This arrangement is a requirement under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) Program. The institutions of higher education will look to the transcript for the SASID for all new enrollees beginning with the fall of 2011.

For your information, a preliminary check of applications to CSUS for the Fall of 2011 suggests that approximately half of Connecticut Public School Systems have not yet begun to include student identifier (SASID) on the transcripts that we have received. As those SASID numbers begin to appear, we are prepared to capture them.

3. House Bill 6321, *An Act Concerning a College Transition Pilot Program*.

We believe that the concept of such a transition program may have great promise both as an available alternative for potential students who need remediation and as a way to provide this service at lower cost.

Several questions should be considered as part of the discussions going forward, including:

- How will such a program be funded?
- Who would be offering this instruction?
- How will they align the developmental coursework with the expectations of the university?
- Does this mean setting up another entire operation that would duplicate what the university already has available and could run during the summer?

As this concept evolves and a funding source is identified, we would welcome the opportunity to participate in discussions about the program content, implementation and outcomes.

I hope that this information is helpful to your deliberations on the proposed bills before you today. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share these comments on behalf of the Connecticut State University System.